

VZCZCXRO9198
RR RUEH DU RUEHMR RUEHRN
DE RUEHSB #0128/01 0441134
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
R 131134Z FEB 08 ZDS MESSAGE GARBLED
FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2478
INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 000128

SIPDIS

C O R R E C T E D COPY (MESSAGE RECEIVED GARBLED)

SECRET NOFORN

SIPDIS
SIPDIS

FOR DS/IP/AF, DS/IP/ITA
AF/S
S/CT
CA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/13/2018
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [AMGT](#) [CASC](#) [PREL](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: HARARE: EAC MEETS TO DISCUSS ELECTIONS AND CEPA

REF: A. HARARE 096

[1](#)B. HARARE 100

HARARE 00000128 001.3 OF 002

Classified By: Ambassador James D. McGee, REASONS 1.4 (B,C)

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (SBU) The Harare Emergency Action Committee (EAC) convened on February 8 to discuss the upcoming elections. The EAC concluded that there were no indications to date of electoral violence, but elections were almost two months away and the Mission would need to closely monitor developments. The entry of Simba Makoni (a prominent member of the ruling party, ZANU-PF) into the presidential race could be an exacerbating factor, contributing to instability in an already fractious ZANU-PF. The EAC considered security measures that should be implemented in preparation for the elections. It recommended scrutiny of official visitors' requests for country clearance and issuance of a travel warning. The Ambassador concurred with the EAC's recommendations. END SUMMARY.

The March 29 Elections

[1](#)2. (SBU) The DCM chaired a meeting of the Emergency Action Committee on February 8 to discuss elections scheduled for March 29 and their possible impact on Embassy security. Representatives from RSO, POL, DAO, CONS, USAID, CDC, MGT, RA, MSG, IMO, MED, CLO, and PAS participated.

[1](#)3. (C) The discussion was opened by PolOff, who opined that there were no indications of potential violence but that elections were still two months away. The Mission would need to carefully monitor developments. The entry of Simba Makoni into the presidential race (Ref B) could be an exacerbating factor, contributing to additional tensions in an already unstable ZANU-PF. The news that the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) split was irreconcilable (Ref A) also adds to the uncertainty.

[1](#)4. (C) PolOff stated that an outbreak of ethnic violence

(similar to events following elections in Kenya) was unlikely since the Shona, who are dominant in ZANU-PF, are the dominant tribe (over 70 percent) in Zimbabwe. In the event of a stolen election, it was unlikely that discontent would play out along tribal lines.

15. (S/NF) RA Chief added that the Central Intelligence Organization (CIO) and Zimbabwe Defense Force (ZDF) were reportedly split in their support of Mugabe and Makoni. Worst case, this situation could cause a confrontation between the two factions.

16. (C) The EAC agreed that it was too early to reach definitive conclusions about the potential for pre- or post-election violence, particularly since the Makoni announcement had introduced a new element of uncertainty about fissures within ZANU-PF. The Committee agreed to reconvene in the coming weeks to assess how things develop

Security Measures?

17. (SBU) The RSO then led a discussion of practical security measures that should be considered in the near future:

- a. The RSO described the upcoming DS Mobile Training Team visit and the importance of wide participation in the training. The EAC was advised that this training was supported by the Ambassador and that supervisors should encourage their employees to attend.
- b. The EAC considered whether it would be appropriate to place restrictions on travel in Zimbabwe by employees and AmCits. The EAC agreed that there was not enough information to justify a travel restriction at this time. The EAC recommended that the front office be consulted prior to granting country clearance for official visitors planning to arrive after March 15 to ensure that visits which could be postponed do not overburden support capabilities. The EAC further suggested that the front office clear on all visitors planning travel outside of Harare after March 1. The

HARARE 00000128 002.3 OF 002

Ambassador agreed with these EAC recommendations.

c. The EAC then reviewed the Mission's emergency communications capability in light of the elections and continued deterioration of the cell phone network. RSO reported that the cascade notification drill and extra radio check on February 5 were successful; almost every direct hire employee participated in the radio check, and RSO was following up with the exceptions. Agencies reported on their other, multi-layered communications capabilities:

- IMO advised that the Embassy has four satellite phones, two of which are dedicated for use at the primary and alternate command posts. There are high frequency radios in IPC and at Post One, as well as in three embassy vehicles. IMO noted that the Embassy utilized a service contract for its satellite phones rather than pre-paid cards which expire and might not function when needed. He therefore recommended that other Mission agencies enter into similar service contracts for their satellite phones, rather than using phone cards. The Embassy is also using 20 CDMA phones to supplement communications at those residences that have frequent land-line failure or which house employees in key positions. In the longer term, the Embassy plans to supplement all residences with CDMA phones in anticipation of further breakdown in the land-line and cellular networks.

- AID advised that it has 12 satellite phones, two of which are currently activated; all will be activated during the elections. It has purchased HF radio equipment for use in the USAID alternate command post and is awaiting USAID technicians to install it. AID is obtaining CDMA phones for

its residences.

- CDC advised that it had no satellite phones, high frequency radios, or CDMA phones.

The EAC concluded that the present Mission emergency communications network was satisfactory for assuring communications during the elections. It further agreed to encourage all agencies to review their communications inventory in light of the failing land-line and cellular phone networks.

d. ConOff distributed draft copies of a Consular Travel Alert for EAC approval. The EAC revised the draft Alert and recommended its approval to the Ambassador, who concurred.

e. CLO briefed the EAC on plans to arrange a workshop at which CLO and RSO meet with employees and spouses to discuss the security situation in Zimbabwe, emergency procedures, and family evacuation familiarization and preparation. The EAC agreed that a meeting similar to Consular's recent AmCits Town Hall meeting would be helpful for the general Mission employee population as well. The EAC suggested that these meetings occur as follow-up to the DS Mobile Training Team program.

CEPA

18. (U) DCM told the EAC that, while Post's Emergency Action Plan (EAP) was fully updated in early 2007, the effort underway to transfer the plan into DS's Crisis and Emergency Planning Application (CEPA) would enhance access to the EAP. She urged all sections to make completion of this transfer a priority.

Next Meeting

19. (U) The EAC agreed to reconvene in the coming weeks as warranted to review the security situation in light of unfolding political developments.

MCGEE